



House Bill 7000
An Act Concerning Government Administration
Testimony of Commissioner Melody A. Currey

Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 16, 2015

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) thanks the Committee for raising **House Bill 7000, "An Act Concerning Government Administration"**, and offers the following testimony in support of sections two through five of this bill.

Sections two, three and four of HB 7000 clarify provisions of the State Personnel Act that were amended in 2013 and are necessary to enable DAS to serve state agencies efficiently and effectively. Section two returns to DAS the authority to retain exam lists for three years, instead of two years, if necessary. This change is essential particularly for exams that attract thousands of applicants; agencies simply cannot work their way through the exam list to all of the applicants in two years. Returning to the 3 year limit on such exams saves the State money in terms of the time and resources needed to conduct the exams and eliminates from applicants the burden of taking unnecessary exams. Section two also conforms the language regarding continuous recruitment exams to the existing practice by clarifying that the needs of state service determine the length those exam lists are active from the start -- not just when making decisions about extensions.

In 2013, the State Personnel Act was modified to give DAS the authority to charge fees to applicants to state employment examinations. Section three of HB 7000 simply clarifies that DAS must write regulations relating to exam fees only if DAS in fact implements those fees.

Section four of HB 7000 also clarifies an ambiguity created by the 2013 changes to the State Personnel Act. The 2013 changes expanded the types of situations where an examination would not be required by adding in a provision whereby agencies could seek waivers from the examination process if the agency commissioner submitted a delegation plan to DAS. Prior to 2013, however, state employment examinations had not been required for certain professions where the possession of a professional license, degree or other credentials were a mandatory requirement, such as attorneys, medical doctors, etc. Section four simply clarifies that the delegation plan requirement created in 2013 applies only to the 2013 waiver process, and not to the professional titles that

had always been non-examined. Section four also clarifies that DAS audits of agency recruitments under the delegation plan process are at the discretion of DAS.

Finally section 5 of HB 7000 eliminates an obsolete provision in one of the statutes that applies to the Statewide Workers' Compensation Program. Specifically subsection (b) of section 31-284a of the Connecticut General Statutes states that the state shall not make any payment to a facility owned in whole or in part by the referring practitioner.

This provision has been on the books since 1981 but the industry has changed significantly in the intervening 30+ years, rendering this blanket prohibition unnecessary. DAS controls the risk of improper utilization of medical services by assessing the medical necessity of all treatments. Indeed, the Workers' Compensation Commission regulates this activity and does, in fact, allow doctors to refer patients to facilities that they own, with limited certain exceptions that we follow. If the state were forced to comply with this provision, it would result in some of our best practitioners and facilities leaving the system. Removing this sentence from section 31-284a would enable status quo to continue, and allow DAS to continue its responsibility to efficiently and cost-effectively provide workers' compensation benefits to injured state employees.

DAS thanks the Committee for raising this bill.